

# Maine Council for English Language Arts Monthly Newsletter

## *MCELA Matters*

*programs, ideas, connections*



April 2022

March is [National Poetry Month](#). Here are some ideas for celebrating the month with your students:

- [Car Window Poetry](#)
- [Using Primary Sources to Create Found Poetry](#)
- [Poem in Your Pocket Day](#)

Subscribe to these sources to receive poetry in your inbox:

- [Poets.org Poem a Day](#)
- [Pome by Matthew Ogle](#)
- [The Slowdown](#)

*Carrie Barbosa, President*  
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## *Programming Matters*

Join us for our seventh session of **Teachers Write**  
April 4 from 4:00 - 5:00 via Zoom





**REGISTER HERE**

Join us for our latest session of  
**What's Working Wednesdays**

A poster for an online webinar. The background is split into blue and orange sections. On the left, the text reads: "Approaches to Teaching Poetry", "What's Working Wednesday", "April 13, 2021". On the right, there is a circular portrait of Todd McKinley, a man wearing a green baseball cap. Below the portrait, the text reads: "TODD MCKINLEY", "English Teacher", "Maine Writing Project Teacher Consultant, doctoral student UMO, Leonard Middle School, Old Town". At the bottom left is the logo for the Maine Council for English Language Arts, featuring a graduation cap and an open book. At the bottom right, there is a blue icon of a video camera and a calendar icon. The text next to the video icon reads: "ONLINE WEBINAR". The text next to the calendar icon reads: "13 APRIL, 2021", "Wednesday 4:30-5:30 pm".

During this session, you will learn about and try a number of approaches to teaching poetry. More than any other genre, appreciating poetry comes through the creation of poetry, playing with language and reading poetry out loud. You will leave this session knowing you can introduce students to poetry and planting the seeds of a life-long love for the written and spoken word. You might even discover an interest in writing your own poetry...

**REGISTER HERE**

## *Idea Matters*

**from the IDEA Collective**

*Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access for Teachers of English Language Arts*

The IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access) Collective focuses on an important goal: Support Maine educators as they explore ways to develop materials and practices for inclusion, diversity, equity, and access. In particular, MCELA invites educators to think about, discuss, and take steps to address issues related to racism, income disparity, gender identity, environmental justice, equity, genocide, and indigenous sovereignty. Each month, the IDEA Collective of MCELA will share a resource for educators to explore and consider using in their practice and with their students.

To celebrate National Poetry Month, we offer resources to encourage engagement with diverse voices through poetry. We also offer a range of resources allowing you and your students to access these materials: digital, print, audio, and video! Check out these diverse ways to include all learners in celebrating poetry.

Read, Write & Listen: In celebration of 25 years on National Poetry Month, The Telling Room has created an anthology of poetry by Maine students. [A New Land](#) celebrates life in Maine while offering diverse perspectives of youth from a variety of countries. Last year, every Maine high school library received a free copy of this anthology, and the Telling Room has created a toolkit for teachers to bring these poems and writers into the classroom. The Telling Room site provides a PDF of

the poems and links to Check out these resources and let MCELA and let colleagues know how you used this anthology and the resources.

Write: Wondering how to bring the writing of poetry into your classroom? Try this resource - [Poetry in Schools](#). This guide for teachers allows you to create your own unit of poetry and to learn about new ways to inspire students to hone their craft. Check it out!

View & Listen: Check out this spoken word performance from Abdul Ali, where he reads his piece "[System is a 'Chess Game'](#)". From Maine Kids VOICE: "Abdulkadir Ali is an Ethiopian-American social activist, who brings his voice and experience to advocate for racial and criminal justice here in Maine. From human rights to community leadership, Ali is working to address issues that continuously occur in silenced communities caused by systematic oppression."

View & Listen: ICYMI - Check out the [Maine Poetry Out Loud Finals](#) from April of 2021. Watch and listen to Maine students bring alive familiar and newer poetry. If you are a high school teacher, consider how you might participate in future POL competitions. Of course, any teacher can host their own celebration of the spoken word!

Looking for more? Check out the NCTE Position Statement on "[Resolution on the Need for Diverse Children's and Young Adult Books](#)." And NCTE Verse.

## *Book Matters*





Formerly titled *The Hill We Climb and Other Poems*, the luminous poetry collection by #1 *New York Times* bestselling author and presidential inaugural poet Amanda Gorman captures a shipwrecked moment in time and transforms it into a lyric of hope and healing. In *Call Us What We Carry*, Gorman explores history, language, identity, and erasure through an imaginative and intimate collage. Harnessing the collective grief of a global pandemic, this beautifully designed volume features poems in many inventive styles and structures and shines a light on a moment of reckoning. *Call Us What We Carry* reveals that Gorman has become our messenger from the past, our voice for the future.



More and more people are turning to poetry as an antidote to divisiveness, negativity, anxiety, and the frenetic pace of life. *How to Love the World: Poems of Gratitude and Hope* offers readers uplifting, deeply felt, and relatable poems by well-known poets from all walks of life and all parts of the US, including inaugural poet Amanda Gorman, Joy Harjo, Naomi Shihab Nye, Ross Gay, Tracy K. Smith, and others. The work of these poets captures the beauty, pleasure, and connection readers hunger for. *How to Love the World*, which contains new works by Ted Kooser, Mark Nepo, and Jane Hirshfield, invites readers to use poetry as part of their daily gratitude practice to uncover the simple gifts of abundance and joy to be found everywhere. With pauses for stillness and invitations for writing and reflection throughout, as well as reading group questions and topics for discussion in the back this book can



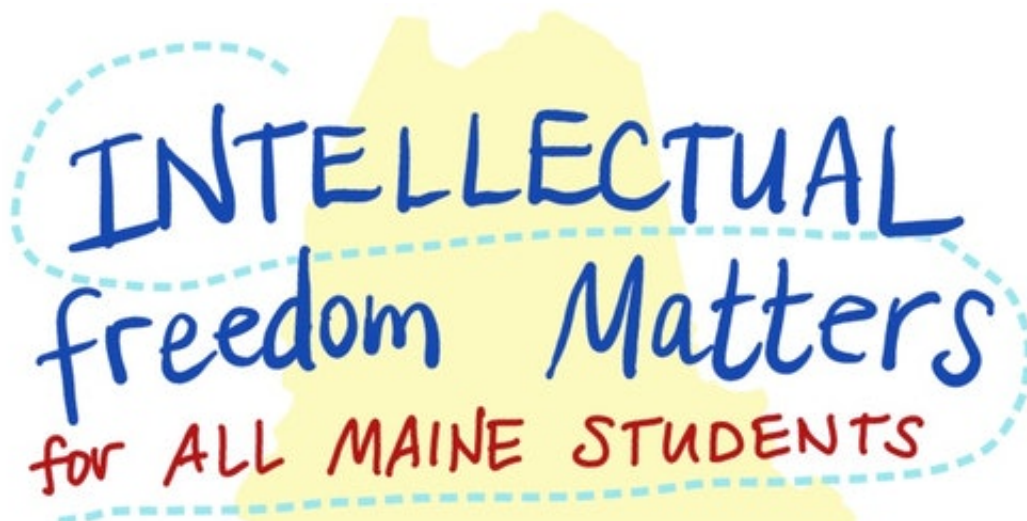
In this stunning collection, Joy Harjo finds blessings in the abundance of her homeland and confronts the site where the Mvskoke people, including her own ancestors, were forcibly displaced. From her memory of her mother's death, to her beginnings in the Native rights movement, to the fresh road with her beloved, Harjo's personal life intertwines with tribal histories to create a space for renewed beginnings.

"A powerful reminder as to why [Joy] Harjo's voice is so at home everywhere.... When a poet scales her gaze so grandly, something strange and miraculous happens to poetry. It opens up and becomes more than a mere literary device, it becomes a delivery system of wonder.... Harjo's goal as a poet has been to wake us up, to talk to us as if there is nothing so natural as singing. It is impossible to read this beautiful book and not wonder if

at the back, this book can be used to facilitate discussion in a classroom or in any group setting.

BOOK AND NOT WORKER in our world would be a little better if more of us remembered how."

– **John Freeman, Boston Globe**



**We stand with Maine educators and librarians in ensuring and protecting students' rights to intellectual freedom.**

Get the resources & talking points:  
[bit.ly/FReadomME](https://bit.ly/FReadomME)



## *Membership Matters*

The pandemic has forced us to change our membership structure since membership has been tied to our annual conference in the past. We are excited to announce a new membership structure that is an annual fee and covers all of our programming\*

For an annual membership, we are asking for a donation of \$30.

Did you know you can put the cost of membership for your entire English department into your district budget? When it's time to request funds from your district for next year's budget, consider adding a line for membership for MCELA for all ELA teachers in your school. Membership is just \$30 a person and will bring a year's worth of PD and a discounted rate for the annual MCELA conference.

\*We will be offering an exclusive author talk in the spring that will come with an additional charge.

### ALREADY A MEMBER?

Use your membership number to access [MEMBERS-ONLY CONTENT](#) on the MCELA website, including recordings of past webinars.

[DONATE HERE](#)

stay tuned via social media

